

Lawns to Legumes

Program Overview

What does this program do?

Lawns to Legumes aims to protect the federally endangered rusty patched bumblebee (Minnesota's state bee) and other at-risk pollinators.

Lawns to Legumes offers workshops, coaching, planting guides and cost-share funding for installing pollinator-friendly native plantings in residential lawns. The program also campaigns to raise awareness for pollinator habitat projects and offers grants for demonstration neighborhoods, community projects that create habitat corridors and showcase best practices.

Why does this matter?

Minnesota is home to more than 450 native bee species. Pollinators also include butterflies, moths, beetles and native flies. All play a key role in pollinating many food crops and native plants, but populations have significantly declined worldwide in recent years. Population decline can be attributed to habitat loss and lack of related nutrition for pollinators, as well as pesticide use and pathogens.

Even relatively small plantings of native flowers can help create conditions that are highly valuable to pollinators and can help build important habitat corridors.

Am I eligible? When can I apply for funding?

Anyone is welcome to use the planting guide developed for this program to help plan a pollinator habitat project. Minnesota residents who have an area at their home that can be used for outdoor planting can apply for a combination of technical assistance (workshops, coaching) and cost-share funding.

In December 2019, Blue Thumb began accepting applications from residents for reimbursement funding. Apply on Blue Thumb's website <https://bluethumb.org/lawns-to-legumes/>. Applications were accepted for spring 2020 projects through Feb. 28. A second application period for fall projects launched March 9 and concluded June 2.

Applicants who are accepted into the Lawns to Legumes individual support program can receive up to \$350 of funding through a reimbursement process. Funding decisions will be made and all notifications emailed in March for spring 2020 installations.



your yard
CAN BEE
the **CHANGE**
#Lawns2Legumes

Demonstration neighborhoods

In addition to the individual support component of the program, Lawns to Legumes aims to establish high-profile community-wide projects located in important pollinator pathways to highlight best practices.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued by BWSR in January 2020 inviting local governments, tribal governments, and nonprofits to apply to establish a demonstration neighborhood. As of September 2020, 12 demonstration neighborhood programs funded by BWSR are active statewide.

Outreach and awareness

Lawns to Legumes strives to promote public adoption of residential pollinator habitat through a coalition of supportive groups including Blue Thumb, non profits and more. A public outreach campaign will raise awareness around issues affecting Minnesota pollinators.

Getting started now

You don't have to wait to start planning a pollinator-friendly yard! Resources for planning projects can be found at www.bwsr.state.mn.us/l2l. These include:

- Planting for Pollinators: BWSR's one stop shop guide for residential pollinator habitat
- Gardens for Pollinators: Tips from the Xerces Society
- DIY Bee Lawn: Steps for creating a bee lawn from Blue Thumb
- Build a Pollinator Garden in Seven Steps: Advice from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Top 10 native plants for Minnesota bumble bees

- Virginia bluebells
- Blazingstars
- Wild white indigo
- Milkweeds
- Goldenrods
- Beebalm
- Beardtongues
- Red columbine
- Asters
- Blue giant hyssop

